

VZCZCXRO1707
OO RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHNO #0706/01 3451417
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 111417Z DEC 06
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0286
INFO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 0231
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 0489
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 000706

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/07/2016
TAGS: [MARR](#) [NATO](#) [OVIP](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: BOUCHER AND NATO TALK AFGHANISTAN STRATEGY AND
COORDINATION

Classified By: CDA Richard Olson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1.(C) Summary: Assistant Secretary for South and Central
Asian Affairs Richard Boucher met December 7 with NATO
Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer to discuss strategy for

SIPDIS

Afghanistan and Pakistan. Boucher said it was not clear what
value an Afghanistan Contact Group, as proposed at the Riga
Summit, would add to existing groups. Both the Secretary
General and Boucher agreed that upcoming high-level meetings
of the G-8, EU, NATO and the Joint Coordination and
Monitoring Board should be used to coordinate policy in
Afghanistan. A/S Boucher told de Hoop Scheffer the U.S. is
considering a significant increase in assistance to
Afghanistan, based on a recent strategic review. The
Secretary General expressed concern that NATO lacks a

SIPDIS

coordinated civil-military strategy in Afghanistan, and
called on the European Union (EU) to provide more assistance.
The Secretary General said he is not sure of Pakistan's
commitment in dealing with "problems" along its border with
Afghanistan, and said he will travel to Islamabad to meet
with President Musharraf. Boucher noted the resurgence of
the Taliban has led the U.S. to reassess its
counterinsurgency strategy, and offered U.S. experts to help
NATO adjust its strategy also. End Summary.

Afghanistan Contact Group and Meeting Calendar

=====

12. (C) Assistant Secretary Boucher said it is not yet clear
what an Afghanistan Contact Group, as proposed at the Riga
Summit, would do to improve coordination and strategy within
the international community. The Secretary General said he
had spoken with President Karzai earlier in the day, in part
to "calm him down" over the proposed contact group; de Hoop
Scheffer emphasized the need to understand Karzai's
authority as the elected president of Afghanistan. However,
he noted, there is a "hodge podge" of development players and
projects; something is still missing in the coordination.
A/S Boucher suggested three important items to address: civil
- military coordination within the International Security
Assistance Force; an Afghan government policy on corruption;
and more large-scale development projects, particularly
electricity and road building. The Secretary General noted a
development strategy will help convince publics of the need
to maintain troops in the field as security providers for
assistance projects.

13. (C) Ambassador Nuland suggested using upcoming high-level
meetings to coordinate Afghanistan policy. The Secretary
General agreed, suggesting the G-8 put Afghanistan on its
agenda, and invite NATO and EU representatives, to see if

this can "pull the strands together." He added it is time to start "playing on Chancellor Merkel,s conscience," as Germany will soon have the chairmanship of both the EU and the G-8. Boucher suggested using the reinforced meeting of the North Atlantic Council at the level of Political Directors in January, the upcoming NATO Foreign Ministerial, and a high-level meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board to help focus Afghan strategy.

PermReps Discuss Afghanistan Contact Group

=====

¶4. (C) During a separate meeting with NATO PermReps, Assistant Secretary Boucher said the proposed Contact Group would make sense only if it helps develop strategy. He stressed the need to keep the London Compact on track, and to reinforce the capacity of the Afghan government. French Ambassador Duque said President Chirac,s concept of the Contact Group is to "pursue a comprehensive strategy" with international organizations and neighboring countries. It will aim to ensure that commitments are "enhanced," and to "keep the international community on its toes." The Iraq Study Group, Duque added, came to a similar conclusion by proposing a support group for Iraq. Boucher responded there is a need to ensure not only that strategy is implemented, but also to increase the level of resources flowing into Afghanistan. The U.S. has decided to significantly increase its assistance; we hope other countries will do the same. Ambassador Nuland pointed out that Iraq lacks a body equivalent to the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board.

Development And Counterinsurgency

=====

¶5. (C) A/S Boucher told de Hoop Scheffer the U.S. is considering a significant increase in assistance to Afghanistan, based on a recent strategic review. Once the

USNATO 00000706 002 OF 003

Office of Management and Budget produces final numbers, these will be briefed to NATO. These funds will go to reconstruction projects, including electricity projects and roads; to funnel money into Provincial Reconstruction Teams; and to help train and equip Afghan security forces. There will also be additional funds for Pakistan, particularly for development in the tribal areas bordering Afghanistan. The two billion dollars from last year,s supplemental are now being spent on training and equipping the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police, and are helping to "kick start" the police.

¶6. (C) Boucher noted successes in several provinces of Afghanistan, particularly where military action has been followed by coordinated efforts to improve governance and carry out reconstruction projects. The Secretary General complained that, within the alliance, each country has its own development strategy. This is turning into a "beauty contest," with each country advertising its efforts without following an overall strategy. In addition, he said, NATO is split between a development side and a military side, and is still "miles away from an integrated approach." Boucher agreed that NATO still lacks a linked effort, but described how the U.S., after much effort, had made progress on integrating the military, political and reconstruction pieces.

¶7. (C) Boucher noted that, until recently, Operation Enduring Freedom was "chasing the bad guys" and making space for reconstruction efforts. Now, with a resurgent Taliban, we are involved in a classic counterinsurgency. Experts in the U.S. are developing a counterinsurgency strategy, including how Afghan forces can adopt a more integrated strategy. Boucher offered to have these experts brief at NATO, and called on the Alliance to reassess its own strategy.

Border Issues and Pakistan

=====

¶18. (C) The Secretary General said he is unsure if Pakistan is part of the problem or part of the solution in Afghanistan, and questioned how serious President Musharraf is in helping to solve "problems" along the border with Afghanistan. Different military authorities give him different advice - some International Security Assistance Force officers say the Pakistanis are serious about confronting insurgents, while other senior military officials have expressed doubts.

¶19. (C) Assistant Secretary Boucher stressed the need to look at both sides of the border as a whole, with their related problems. In particular, it will be necessary to extend governance to all border areas of both countries. Cross-border finger pointing continues, with Musharraf blaming the insurgency on corrupt Afghan officials, and Karzai blaming Pakistan for not cracking down on insurgent safe havens on their side of the border. To make progress, both sides need to reduce the rhetoric.

¶10. (C) De Hoop Scheffer asked if it would be useful to travel to Pakistan to talk to President Musharraf, adding there is no use criticizing Musharraf publicly. Boucher encouraged a visit, and suggested the Secretary General emphasize the Taliban is also a threat to Pakistan. The Taliban command and control structure in Quetta is still intact, said Boucher; while Musharraf has heard the message that he must go after all terrorist groups, this message needs to be reinforced.

European Union

=====

¶11. (C) Boucher noted the European Union's new seven-year budget for Afghanistan provides less funding than previous budgets. The EU, he said, is not coming up with the necessary resources. The Secretary General agreed, saying that, after the hard fighting in Helmand Province this year, the military effort was not followed up with adequate development and reconstruction efforts. EU leaders need to go to the "political market" and increase support for Afghanistan. He hoped that the EU would address Afghanistan at its upcoming summit. Ambassador Nuland added the EU should also provide development assistance to Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas.

¶12. (U) Participants:

USNATO 00000706 003.2 OF 003

U.S. Delegation:

Assistant Secretary Richard Boucher

Ambassador Victoria Nuland
Ms. Fatema Sumar, SCA
USNATO notetaker

NATO Staff:

Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer
Ambassador Schuwer, Acting Director, Private Office
Mr. Joe Manso, Deputy Director, Private Office

¶13. (U) Assistant Secretary Boucher's staff has cleared this cable.
NULAND